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HANNAH,

7

THE MOTHER OF SAMUEL THE PROPHET

AND JUDGE OF ISRAEL.

A SACRED DRAMA

Full



H A N N A H.

Nam et Heli sacerdote reprobato, institutus est in DEI ministerium Samuel, simul officio functus Sacerdotis et Judicis.

Mater quoque ipsa Samuelis Anna . . . gratulationem suam DOMINO fundit exultans : quando eundem puerum natum, et ablactatum, DEO reddidit, eadem pietate, qua noverat. . . . Hæc Anna prophetavit, Samuelis sancti viri mater multumque laudati.

AUGUSTIN. *De Civitate Dei*, lib. 17. cap. 4.

Samuel ab initio ætatis suæ in templo crevit. Mater ejus sterilis oravit ad DOMINUM cum gemitu magno. Vovit eum DOMINO DEO. Natus sanctus Samuel fuit . . . Mox ut eum ablactavit, dedit in templum, ut ibi cresceret, ibi roboraretur in spiritu, ibi DEO serviret. Factus est Samuel sacerdos magnus, sacerdos sanctus, illo tempore.

AUG. *In Psal.* 98.

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See Vol. 14. Page 6.

HANNAH,

7 James Munroe &
Prop

THE MOTHER OF SAMUEL THE PROPHET

AND JUDGE OF ISRAEL.

A SACRED DRAMA.

Louisa Jane Park Hall.

. ποτε καὶ αἱ ἁγίαι γυναῖκες αἱ ἐλπίζουσαι ἐπὶ τὸν Θεόν.

1 PETER, iii. 5.

Οὐδὲν ἄρα ἴσον εὐχῆς, ἀγαπητοί, οὐδὲν πίστεως δυνατώτερον.
'Αμφότερα ἔδειξεν ἡμῖν ἡ Ἄννα πρόφην· μετὰ γὰρ τούτων προσελ-
θοῦσα τῷ Θεῷ, τῶν δώρων, πάντα ὅσα ἐθέλησεν ἦρυσε. . . . Καὶ
πάντες ἠκούσατε, πῶς ἠύξατο, πῶς ἤτησε, καὶ ἔπεισε, καὶ ἔλαβε,
καὶ ἔτεκε καὶ ἔθρεψε καὶ ἀνέθρεξε τὸν Σαμουὴλ.

CHRYSTOSTOM. Εἰς τὴν Ἄνναν. Λογ. β'.

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TO

CHRISTIAN MOTHERS

THIS LITTLE VOLUME

IS INSCRIBED.

Anna, filium quem Deo voverat, postquam obtulit in tabernaculo, nunquam recepit; . . . arbitrata, ut futurus Propheta cresceret. Miraris felicitatem sanctam mulieris? Imitare fidem.

JEROME. *Ad Lætam.*

Ita jejunium in DEUM reverentiæ opus est, per quod Anna quoque ambiens uxor Helcanæ retro sterilis impetravit facile a DEO inanem cibo . . . filio implere, et quidem Propheta. . .

Enim et abstinencia vini . . . et Samuelem DEO voverat, et Aaronem consecrârat. Nam de Samuele mater, Et vinum, inquit, et ebriamen non bibet: talis enim et ipsa DEUM orabat.

TERTULLIAN. *De Jejuniiis.*

Ὁ παρθένιας γυναικός (ἡ Ἀννης) . . . Καὶ οἶνον καὶ μέθυμα οὐ μὴ πίνεται, φησίν. . . . Ἐπὶ τὸν Θεὸν ὤψασα τὸ πᾶν, καὶ πρὸ τῶν ὠδίνων . . . ἡγιαζέτο προσήτην ἔχουσα, καὶ ἱερὰ κυοῦσα, καὶ τὸ ἀνάθημα φέρουσα, ἀνάθημα ἔμψυχον.

Ἀπὸ τῆς ὀδίνης ἡ εἰς τὴν προσεκικωτέρα γέγονεν, ἡ εἰς τὸν Θεὸν ἐπεσπάσατο, καὶ ἐπινεύσαι ἐποίησε καὶ οὕτως ὁ Σαμουὴλ ἐτέχθη. . . . Τεκοῦσα δὲ τὸ παιδίον, ἐγάλεσεν αὐτὸ Σαμουὴλ, τουτέστιν, ἀκούσει Θεοῦ.

CHRYSOSTOM. *Εἰς τὴν ἡ Ἀνναν. Λογ. α'.*

P R E F A C E .

THE early books of the Old Testament not only contain much matter of historical value, but they act upon the reader with a peculiar *dramatic effect*.

The effect, to which we allude, is noticed in any book, where individuals are introduced directly to our attention, as speaking in their proper persons; and more sensibly, where several individuals are represented in dialogue. Thus we perceive this effect in the Histories of Xenophon and Josephus, of Livy and Tacitus and Sallust, in the Epics of Homer and Virgil, in the Satires of Juvenal, among familiar examples; and we are interested more by these writers than by others in the same departments of literature, who have overlooked this cause of their popularity. For a similar reason, Allegorical Fictions and Novels, which all are epic or historical in their character, engage our sensibilities immediately and forcibly.

A great many subjects do not, indeed, admit this effect; and the largest number of books must be unavoidably without it. But historical narration becomes tedious, when it is, for any length of time, excluded. It is the life of narrative, the principle which gives animation and seeming reality to historical action. Besides, when we read the very language of an individual, we exercise our own discrimination, in forming an opinion of his character; we become ourselves actors, judges, and are not mere passive learners; while he is no longer one of whom we have only heard, but is made an acquaintance. Thus a Journal, or a volume of Letters, excites us more readily and intensely than any description of a man's life or qualities by the author. Thus, too, an Oration is more entertaining than a Dissertation.

Perhaps the preceding remarks suggest a reason for the interest which is felt in perusing the early books of the Old Testament, where each subject of the history gives us, through his own words, a key to his character and purposes and course of life, and is, as it were, introduced to our personal knowledge—in their dramatic effect. This effect may be aided by the simple idioms of

an ancient language, and by the mode in which these Scriptures were composed. The four last books of the Pentateuch are chiefly a diary of Moses. Genesis seems to be a compilation by Moses, (forming a necessary introduction to his diary,) from documents in his possession, under a Divine guidance. The other of these Scriptures, from Joshua through the Chronicles, seem likewise to be selected and put together, under a similar direction of God, from later and larger books, authentic and well known in their age. From the mode of their composition, in connexion with the fact that they were written in that early, pastoral period, when language was in its youth, and history was dressed in the light and attractive garb of fable, we should expect to find, in these early Hebrew records, brevity of description, minuteness of incident, and unity in the several accounts; and we are not disappointed. The Book of Genesis and the First Book of Samuel are illustrations. What can exceed, in dramatic effect, the story of Joseph in the former, or those of Hannah, and Eli, and Samuel, and Saul, and David, in the latter? Few formal dramas rise to their effect.

The following pages are founded upon the first

and second chapters of the First Book of Samuel, and the Acts succeed each other in the order of the Scriptural narrative.

One object of them is to exemplify the composition and style of the early Hebrew Scriptures, as remarkably adapted to produce a dramatic effect. Any careful reader of the First Book of Samuel, for instance, will observe a succession of narratives, all connected in the whole history, each being a sequel to the preceding, each serving for the basis of a drama, and having its distinctive circumstances, and separate unity. The patience and the reward of Hannah's trust in God are the subject of the first, perhaps the least interesting, in this succession.

Another object is to exhibit the workings of the religious sentiment in a mind situated as was the wife of Elkanah, in an age, when JEHOVAH was manifest Theocrat in Israel, and when the predictions through their forefathers opened new and strange hopes to the mothers in the Twelve Tribes. The character of Hannah, as it may be collected from the condensed relation on which the following pages are founded, appears to be eminently spiritual ; evincing an uncommon fortitude and forbearance and purity, sentiments of exquisite

delicacy, an unresisting acquiescence in the will of God, and unfaltering hope in His mercy; so that the representation of her feelings given by us is not, it is trusted, unnatural or improbable. Moreover, she was endowed with a prophetic inspiration; and she was worthy of it, as also of the dignity to which she was appointed in being the parent of Samuel. By her faith he was raised up, in a wonderful Providence, to be a Prophet and a Judge in Israel, and to prepare for the advent of the Messiah of mankind.

One, who cannot admire, in the character of Hannah, her patient submissiveness under affliction, her steady confidence in God, her cherished desire (hallowed by its motives) that she might at length devote, to her Father in Heaven, that most precious gift which a mother may lay upon His altar, has yet to realize the possession of some of the deepest, and purest, and loveliest rudiments of our devotional and social nature.

The writer is aware that this production, from the nature of its subject, lacks that excitement in its incidents, and that complication in its plot, which are agreeable to all, and are considered essential by many, in a Dramatic Composition. But, since it is intended for only a quiet and con-

templative perusal, this defect may be overlooked. The writer is aware, too, that whatever of interest is excited by it will be felt by the Devotional Affections, and by those Social Instincts, which, although least superficial and manifest in their workings, lie nearest to our spiritual nature. But it is thought that our worthiest sentiments are such as these. The true and only nobility is, as a Heathen Moralist has written, "virtue," or as we should say, in the words of a Christian Poet, "the princely heart of innocence." Any may indulge anger and revenge; few can forgive. Any may act, even violently; few can suffer with patience. Any may trust in themselves; few do trust, without complaining, in the Providence of God. Nor are these hidden sentiments less energetic, because we may not see them in the confusion of a visible excitement. The foam-crested and ragged and fitful waves do terrify; but the long and heavy swells of the unbroken and glassy sea tell of its majesty and its strength.

If any should object to the class of moral sentiments, which is chiefly developed in the history of the subject of this sketch, we will remind them of these three truths: — that "all Scripture, given by Inspiration of God, is profitable;" — that every

emotion, of even our inferior constitution, when acting together with the sentiments of devotion, or directed by motives of piety, becomes exalted, and purified, and, as it were, spiritualized, by the association ;— and that no ordinary event in the Providence of God, and no elementary fact in the operation of that Nature, which Himself, the All-Wise, and Pure, and Perfect, ordained, are unworthy the contemplation of His creatures, or unfitted to their instruction and improvement. Even Philosophy, without Christianity, has taught, that

“ Omnia vero, quæ secundum Naturam fiunt, sunt habenda in *bonis*.”

CICERO. *De Senectute*.

Βούλομαι πρὸς τὴν Ἄνναν ὑμᾶς χειραγωγῆσαι, καὶ εἰς τὸν λειμῶ-
να τῶν κατορθωμάτων τῆς γυναικὸς εἰσαγαγεῖν τὸν λόγον· λειμῶνα
οὐχὶ ῥοδωνίαν ἔχοντα, οὐδὲ ἄνθη μαραινόμενα, ἀλλ' εὐχὴν καὶ πί-
στιν καὶ ἀνεξικακίαν πολλήν. Πολύ γὰρ ταῦτα τῶν ἱερῶν ἀνθέων
εὐωδέστερα, οὐχὶ πηγαῖς ὑδάτων, ἀλλ' ὕμνοις δακρύων ἀρδόμενα.
Οὐ γὰρ οὕτω τοὺς κήπους αἱ πηγαὶ τῶν ταμάτων εὐθαλεστέρους ποι-
οῦσιν, ὥς τὸ φυτὸν τῆς εὐχῆς αἱ πηγαὶ τῶν δακρύων ποτίζουσιν,
πρὸς ὕψος μέγιστον ἀνατρέχειν παρασκευάζουσιν· ὅπερ οὖν καὶ
ἐπὶ τῆς γυναικὸς ταίτης ἐγένετο. Ὁμοῦ γὰρ ἐφθέγγατο, καὶ
πρὸς τὸν οὐρανὸν ἀνέδραμεν ἡ εὐχή, καὶ καρπὸν ἤνεγκεν ὥριμον αὐτῇ,
τὸν ἅγιον Σαμουὴλ.

CHRYSTOSTOM. Εἰς τὴν Ἄνναν. Λογ. γ'.

H A N N A H,
THE MOTHER OF SAMUEL.

PERSONS.

ELI, *the Judge of Israel.*

ELKANAH, *a Levite of Ramah.*

MOHEL.

HANNAH, *wife of Elkanah.*

JEDIDAH, *daughter-in-law of Eli.*

ZARA, *a woman of Belial.*

INFANT SAMUEL, *son of Elkanah and Hannah.*

OLEL, *a little boy, an attendant or disciple of Eli.*

A COMPANY OF JEWS, *at the house of Elkanah.*

SCENE — *at Shiloh and at Ramah.*

HANNAH:¹

A SACRED DRAMA.

ACT I.

SCENE.

Shiloh. At the Feast of the Passover, on the second day, the next after the Paschal Supper had been eaten.² Elkanah, Hannah.

HANNAH — (*walking in the field at evening.*)

AH me ! I'm weary of this strife! world !
Welcome be Death ! would he might quickly come,
To lay my poor, tired body still at rest,
And, 'mid dark Sheol's noiseless mansions, give,
What earth has not, the balmy peace I love !
Here, in this quiet hour of early night,

Peaceful like death, I think of that glad time,
When I shall reach, at length, my quiet home, —
The wicked cease from troubling ever there, ³
And there the weary are at final rest,
The prisoners rest unharmed together there,
And hear the oppressor's angry voice no more, —
For death's unending night is endless peace.
Oh ! how can human hearts, so full of springs
Of social bliss, discord and hate indulge ?
And voices, which might breathe in melodies,
Or unison of kindly speech, more sweet
Than music-chords, in words of wrath delight ?
How can one pain another, when we live
Only to love ; and all the worth of life
Is to make others blest ? But there are those,
The enemies of peace, who never learned
The secret wells of joy our being holds,
Nor quaffed one draught from its deep founts of
bliss.

JEHOVAH ! Thou art hid in mystery,
And hidest knowledge ! still I worship Thee !
Now hath my soul long dwelt among her foes,
My adversary hath provoked me sore,
That I should murmur at JEHOVAH's will,
And curse my God, because He proves His own.
Yet would I soon be gathered to the grave,
Where sleep the fathers, and the happy dead,
Then would I rest —

ELKANAH — (*meeting her.*)

Hannah, why weepest thou ?
Why, when the sacrificial feast is made,
Dost thou not eat the worthy portion spread ?
And why is thy heart grieved ?

HANNAH.

I seek for peace,
Such as this world has never brought to me.
My days have been of disappointment all ;
And hope has been deferred, until my heart ⁴
Is sick, and faints, and life has lost its charm.
I long for rest, Elkanah, rest in death ;
In that long sleep my failing heart would lie,
And be refreshed in its unbroken peace.
As the young babe sinks down amongst his toys,
And slumbers undisturbed, remembering nought,
And feeling nothing but his sweet repose,
So would my heart forget its bitterness,
And sleep — without a dream.

ELKANAH.

Why thus despond ?
Is there no joy of friendship unfulfilled ?
No humble duty left ? no tranquil hope ?

Am not I better to thee than ten sons ?
Shall one distress rob time of all its bloom,
And leave thee desolate ?

HANNAH.

Not desolate.

Yet strip from Libanus its ancient trees,
And its tall peaks, shorn of their majesty,
Would shine across the plain, naked and sere,
E'en if the lowly vine should clasp its sides,
And the small wild-flower blossom round its crags.
So every human life has its chief grace,
Without which it is solitary life,
Whatever else remain.

'Tis thus with me.

I am alone in nature. The light bird
Nurses her progeny, safe, and hears their cry,
Full of maternal thankfulness, when first,
Within the foliage of the branching woods,
They try their notes ;—and the red lioness,
That takes delight in blood, suckles her whelps,
And fondles them, as with a mother's pride ;—
Philistia's infants play about her knees ;—
And Moloch counts his victims from the breast ;—
While I am still denied the common boon,
None trusts, in innocence, my yearning love,

None calls me "Mother," smiling in my arms.
My husband, on Mount Ephraim, thou hast seen,⁵
When the great eagle, who has built her nest
Beneath the highest cliff, has been away
Eastward to Jordan, and returns fatigued,
And falters in her flight so long sustained,
How she has dropped her food, at the loud shout
Of idle shepherds, for the fresh hawk's prey,
And then has perched upon the blasted fir,
Over against her eyry, where she sits,
And hears her hungry young, disconsolate,
But cannot help them. So I feel bereft,
And well-nigh hopeless.

ELKANAH.

Yet the same eagle
Tarries not long upon her resting-place,
But, quick revived, leaps off, and spreads her
wings,
And pierces upward, through the buoyant air,
With narrowing circles, till she poises high,
As if to meditate some new resolve ;
And then, strong-nerved, she seeks again the
place
Where Jordan mingles with Asphaltites,
And traverses the stretching space again,
And wanders there above the winding stream,

Until she bears another booty home ;
And, after all, perchance, at the ninth hour,
Her young may scream unfed. But she toils on ;
For now she speeds her westward course afar,
By fertile Ajalon, and its dark brook,
That empties in the briny main of waves ;
Beyond the outer coast she onward flies,
So that the setting sun may light her search
Upon the face of the Great Central Sea.
And when the twilight's past, and the white moon
Sheds her pale rays upon the loftiest hill,
We've heard the wakeful eaglets of the rock
Rejoicing roughly for their late repast.
Lean thou on God, who feeds the savage brood ;
He may reward thee, Hannah, for thy faith ; —
Thou art of Abraham.

HANNAH.

Thou hast said well,
I am descended from the chosen seed ;
And therefore I had hoped, the Sceptred One,⁶
In whom all nations of the earth are blessed,
Should trace his noble lineage clearly back,
Through her the generous Elkanah loved.
I have thought much about this future Prince,
And in my broken spirit I have learned,
What the ambitious mothers in these tents,—

Who have presented, all but me, their babes,
Before God's good high-priest,—have never
dreamed.

My worn-out heart, dead to the Visible,
And anxious for the grave, has found its peace
In the unseen future of Eternity,—

With God its life is hid ineffable.

This Prince will come, to bless with Love Divine,
To give to man my peace — the spirit's bliss —
(All else is earthly, this alone of God),

To cheer the wretched world, and save the vile,
To reign a Mighty God, the Prince of Peace.

Hearken, Elkanah, I had rather be

Such as I am, though scorned by Israel's dames,
Than be the mother of a Warrior King ;

This is Peninnah's hope, but I love peace.

I *am* a daughter of the holy seed,

Through which the promise runs to be fulfilled,—
In this is sorrow.

ELKANAH.

Then hear thou my word.

Thou knowest, Hannah, I have loved thee well ;
And now my love endures, as when, at first,
I led thee, with my train, betrothed and veiled,⁷
Home, with thy maidens, to my father's house.
But I have known thy pure and blameless truth,

And thou hast seemed, amid thy many griefs,
To commune oft with heavenly messengers,
Till thou hast caught the temper of their world,
And tellest mysteries gathered from their lore.
Now, I revere thee with religious love,
And honor this desire, which is from heaven.
Be not thus sad,—there's comfort in the Law.
Our three first mothers, Sarai, Abram's spouse,
And fair Rebecca, Isaac's cherished wife,
And Rachel, dear to Jacob, from whose son
Thy tribe of Ephraim sprang, were all like thee;
And thou may'st be like them, in trusting God.
Think, too, He has commanded in His word
To muzzle not the ox that treads the corn;^s—
To pay the helpless laborer for his task,
His daily task, soon as the sun has set;—
To leave the harvest-gleaning for the poor
And fatherless. He loves thee;—trust in Him.
JEHOVAH, when we pray, knows all our thoughts,
But sometimes stays His mercy.

HANNAH.

God be praised !
In Him is light, though darkness shroud His
way,
His love pours beauteous hues through all the
cloud.

Yes, I will love Him, though He proves me hard.
Smite me, my Father, I will worship Thee;
Slay me, but I will trust in Thee, O God!

ELKANAH.

Now art thou worthy of the sacred line
Of our great mothers.

HANNAH.

I will think of these,
And strive to follow in their holy path.
In pleading patience to my Maker's will,
And in complete obedience to His word,
I will walk humbly, and rejoice in God
My Saviour.

ELKANAH.

I will never doubt thy faith.
But come, the dew's are falling, and their gems
Are glittering, in the star-light, at our feet,
And the chill night-air bids thee seek thy tent.
The wild-beast soon will rouse him from his lair,
To seize our firstlings — and I watch to-night.⁹
I must away. Wander no farther now,
But seek thy couch, and may the LORD,

The God, who fed old Israel all his days,
The Angel, who redeemed him from the ill,
Bless thee, and guard thy slumbers.

HANNAH.

I obey, —
And may the God, who sleeps not, keep thy life.

(Elkanah departs, and Hannah returns slowly towards the tents.)

Have I found favor in Elkanah's sight?
Sure he regards me with as fond a care
As the last patriarch felt, who patient served,
For Laban's younger daughter, twice seven years,
In Haran's pastures. I will pay his choice,
So undeserved, with kindest offices,
And gain my happiness in yielding his;
I will endure my woes, and throw aside
All selfishness, and wish to live for him.

Behold, my heart has strangely hushed its throbs;
My senses all are calm, as the deep lake,
When the low summer wind has ceased to stir,
And the dry leaf floats on its top unwet.
I breathe another air, and the clear night
Is beautiful; — Nature is full of Love.

Thou God, who mad'st these heavens and all their
host,

I bow before thy dreadful name I AM,
And bless thee for thy love, O LORD of Hosts !¹⁰
Thou didst fast bind the Pleiades in one,
With all their lesser bands, perpetual ;
Vast Orion thou hast chained, and none can loose ;
Mazzaroth, with his signs, thou leadest forth ;
And, with his sons, ever inseparable,
Dost guide Arcturus safe around the pole ;
The Crooked Serpent, in his mazes bent,
Thou holdest in his bounds ; and every orb
Controllest by Thine ordinance of power.
Thy Love is Life, throughout the universe,
And in my soul ; and, while I stand and gaze
Into the firmament, and search its depths
Of viewless, boundless glory, I am rapt,
And blended with the Universal Life.

Soft star, that shinest in the far-off sky,
So mildly bright, and clearly beautiful,
It seems as if some spirit, high-enthroned,
Shadowed its rich experience on thy breast !
Streaming far down through all the deep blue void,
Thy beams fall gently on my burning eyes,
And with their soothing influence still my heart !
They seem to bring a heavenly harmony,
From their hid treasures, to my weary soul ;

They sweetly steal, all pure and pitiful,
Down through the chambers of my secret thoughts,
Dispelling all their gloom, and filling them
With fragrant gladness from a realm of peace !
But I am lingering long. Yet would I wait,
Until I chant once more my evening song,
Taught me, by sadness, in my lonely hours ; —
Thus in all nature Goodness is and rules,
For Sorrow's self gives comfort to her child.

(She sings.)

Star, in the azure height,
Sending thy mellow light,
Down from the distance of the holiest sphere,
High on the heavens thou art,
Type of my weary heart,
Fixed in the lucent ether's upmost mere ;
One GOD and FATHER loves us both,
Our Israel's own JEHOVAH, LORD of Sabaoth !

Thou tremblest o'er the space ; —
Are sorrows in that place,
Where those bright myriads in their beauty glow ?
Or do thy rays go back,
Along their infinite track,
Bearing to thee our tale of human wo ?

There is mysterious sympathy,
Between my trembling heart, O lovely star,
and thee!

Light vapors, on the sky,
Dim thee, in passing by,
And now these dark clouds shut thee from my
view;
But in a little while
They vanish, and thy smile
Plays through their edges with a lustrous hue;
So grief's dull shadows cross my heart,
To make it feel the happier yet when they de-
part!

Another Star shall shine,
With radiance more than thine,
And thou shalt joy, when His effulgence gleams;
New splendors will disperse
Throughout the universe,
Soon as the dazzling Star of Jacob beams;
Thou tellest, He will come at length,
And my heart knows that He is rising in His
strength!

ACT II.

SCENE.

*Shiloh. In the house of Eli, early on the Morning
of the seventh day of the Feast of the Passover.
Eli, Jedidah.*¹¹ .

JEDIDAH.

My father, peace be thine !¹²

ELI.

God be with thee,
And may the blessing of JEHOVAH fall,
Pure as the early dews or morning showers,
On thee, my daughter !

JEDIDAH.

I have marked, of late,
My father, that thy cares are burdensome,
And toils deject thee, heavy for thy years,
Thy steps have failed thee, and thy brow was sad,
But now ——

ELI.

I have long judged in Israel,
To give to every man his just awards,
And to redeem my people from the sword
Of heathen neighbours raging for their ruin,
Who bow to idols, fearing not the LORD ;
And He, who called me to the worthy post,
Has helped me to this hour of feeble age.
But now my days are numbered ; lo, I die,
And what will then remain for Israel ?
I fear these false gods of the nations round
More than their armies, lest my people sin,
And turn away from Him our fathers served,
To follow Chiun, Dagon, Teraphim,
Tammuz and Moloch, Baal, Ashtaroth, —
Creatures, — vain idols of vain worshippers, —
And offer sacrifice to wood and stone,
On all high places, where we honor God.¹³
And there are griefs, my daughter, deepest griefs,
I may not say to thee ; yet God is good,
And He has sent His angel to my soul
With heavenly consolation.

JEDIDAH.

God is good,
Who gives my father comfort, and to thee,

His tried and faithful servant, sends His strength.
This morning thou hast seemed to me, as when,
Three years ago, thy hands did press my head,
And "Bless thee, daughter" was my welcome
here;

Thy brow is now serene, and thy face smiles
More than its wont, dear father.

ELI.

Come to me,
That I may bless my daughter, yet again.

(Jedidah advances, and kneels before him.)

JEHOVAH'S love be with thee, loved of God,
And fill thy soul, Jedidah, evermore!
For thou art dear to Eli, gentle one,
Thy tenderness makes up for many a pang;
May He who loves His chosen keep thy soul!
I may not ask for blessings of the world;
His will be done! Yes, God has granted strength,
E'en while He mingles sadness with my joy.
His name be magnified, and Israel live,
When Eli is not!

JEDIDAH—*(rising.)*

Let me praise His name,
With thee, my father.

ELI.

I will tell it thee.

Last night I lay and thought of Israel
And my hid griefs, wakeful, as is my wont,
And anxious, caring not for rest, when, lo,
A sudden sleep dropped softly on my couch,
And dreamy visions glided past my sight.
Methought I stood once more upon the hill,
Where, in my distant boyhood, long forgot,
I, with the shepherds, watched our flocks at
night.

Far in the prospect was my father's tent,—
I was his eldest, and he loved me much;
There slept my mother, — Eli was her boast;
My younger brothers, — how they trusted me,
And held me greater than the world beside!
My little sisters, — they would clasp me tight,
To list the story of the cruel wolf,
And weep in gladness for the rescued kid;—
There were they all. And now — they all are
dead!

They lay within the shadows of the grave,
Before, Jedidah, thy first infant cry;
But thou, with thy fresh love, art now to me
What they were then ——

JEDIDAH.

Father, forgive the words,
But my full heart must speak. I will be such
As, in my love, shall answer for them all;
And, with sincere exertion, I will strive
To merit the affection free conferred
On me unworthy.

ELI.

Thou deserv'st it well;
But now give ear, while I rehearse the dream.
About the adjacent hills the flocks were spread,
And near the folds our hirelings kept their guard;¹⁴
Some by themselves reclined, some went alone,
And others talked to while the hours away.
I stood apart, and rested on my spear,
And watched the Pleiades in middle heaven.
Six stars I told, the seventh I could not count;¹⁵
And, while I looked in ignorant surprise,
Two stars, the brightest, fell from out their sign,
And perished in the gloom.

I looked again.

The topmost star, and head of all the group,
Leaped upward from its seat, with sudden spring,
But instantly was checked, — and feebly rose,

With slow, decreasing motion, till it stopped, —
And shone a moment from its lonely height, —
And turned majestic through a splendent arc, —
Then, bursting, strewed its brilliant fragments
 wide; —
Its lovely light was gone.

 Another flashed, —
A lowlier, softer star, and tremulous, —
With rapid brightness flashed athwart the sky,
Quick, beautiful, and dazzling; — it was lost.

I gazed, awe-struck, astonished by the scene;
The two remaining stars were fading fast,
Till in their place was left the dark blue void,
The dreary, deep, and measureless abyss.
I groaned in agony, and prayed aloud
That God would call them back, and fix them all
In their first beauty on that dismal sky.

Just then the seventh star, unseen till now,
In the dim distance of the darksome space,
Appeared, a small white spot, a single ray,
And, from those depths illimitable, came,
Enlarging, brightening, in its downward course,
And leading a long train of lesser stars,
Each shining more, until they reached the place
Whence sunk the Pleiades; and there they paused,

And formed, in sacred letters, on the arch,
That name of ours, which means "ONE ASKED OF
God," —

A glorious constellation. Then I waked;
But a sweet calm, like rapture, filled my soul, —
And I will trust in God —

JEDIDAH.

Who is our shield.
May He forefend the ill, and grant us grace!
I dare not think my fears. But I love God,
Who shows, to them that love Him and His word,
His constant mercy.

ELI.

Herein is our hope.
Yet, God is good; — His holy will be done!

(Eli proceeds to the tabernacle.)

JEDIDAH — *(alone.)*

Alas! poor heart, put thou thy trust in God!
He is my hope, when earth's full promise fails.

(She sings.)

Ah, weary spirit, cease,
Thy strugglings cease ;
The grave is kind to broken hearts,
No moan from our sad world its stillness starts ;
There is a final peace,
In Death is peace.

Ah, weary spirit, cease,
Thy strugglings cease ;
Repine not at the mortal strife,
Beyond, for patient souls, waits blissful life ;
There is an endless peace,
In Heaven is peace.

Ah, weary spirit, cease,
Thy strugglings cease ;
Be still, and sweetly sink to rest,
Upon thy Father's bosom be thou blest ;
There is a perfect peace,
In God is peace.

ACT III.

SCENE.

Shiloh. In the Court of the Tabernacle, on the Morning of the seventh day of the Feast, after the worshippers had retired from their morning devotions. Eli, Olél, Zara, Hannah.

HANNAH — (*walking slowly, and meditating, with an absent air.*)

Yes ! I have pondered much the ways of God.
True, He is gracious, though with judgments
 clothed,
His dealings with His chosen ones are just,
Continual goodness tempers His reproofs,
And all His boundless attributes are Love.
I rest upon my God with confidence,
With calm submissiveness, with peaceful hope,
And such undoubting certainty of faith,
As the mere worldly spirit may not feel,
Felt only where He ruleth all in all,—
In heaven, and hearts which have the mind of
 heaven.

Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right ?
Deep in my heart I trust Him and adore.
I know I do not murmur for my lot,
I know I bless JEHOVAH in His reign,
And yet my longing heart retains its wish, —
This mighty impulse, irrepressible,
Whose goings forth seem steady and from God.
I struggle with it always as a foe,
And it still leaves me vanquished in the strife.
I feel this burning, vehement desire
Laid, as a precious offering, unconsumed,
Upon the hidden altar of my soul ;
And, when I seek to quench it with my tears
And many earnest prayers, 't is all in vain, —
My tears and prayers are but as holy oil,
Poured on the sacrifice, to raise the flame.
O might I learn the wisdom of the LORD,
His wondrous counsels so unsearchable,
If He will grant my hope !

*(She stops before the Holy Place and prays, with
manifest emotion.)*

O LORD of Hosts !

Thou dwellest high above the Cherubim,
Yet livest in my soul ; — I feel Thy life,
And know Thy mighty power and wondrous love,
Shown to my inner sense, and there adored ; —
And still I know Thee not, mysterious LORD !

My feeble mind falls, from its upward flight
For Thine unvisited Infinity,
Back to its nothingness ; — Thy ways are dark ;
Thou walkest in the cloud ; while Thy vast throne
Is fixed in glory unapproachable !
But, though Invisible and Unconceived,
Thy presence cheers the meek, and fills my soul ;
Thy Spirit whispers, Thou dost care for me !
I know some large design, befitting God,
Waits in my destiny, — else why *am* I ?
And this desire, which daily gathers strength,
Points up my mind to Thee, its Source Divine !
O God, dost Thou thus try my mortal faith ?
By disappointment's bitterest distress
Dost Thou, my Father, chasten me for heaven ?
Or is the honor, wisely now delayed,
Held in reserve ? Remove, I pray, these doubts,
If it may please Thee ! (She weeps.)

ELI—(*Sitting on the Judge's
Throne, by a Post of the Tabernacle, just within
the outer Gate, some daughters of Belial stand-
ing near him, he being ignorant of their true
character.*)

Daughters, can you tell,
Who, yonder, impious, profanes the court ?
Is she beside herself, thus walking round,

Now here, now there, as in perplexity,
And careless of reproach ?

ZARA.

I know her not.
My lord, such as she seems I shun. 'T is well
That those, who seek the honor of our land,
And to maintain an honorable fame,
Should hold no fellowship —

ELI.

See, where she stops,
Close by the curtains of the Holy Place,
And there, half-turning from our scrutiny,
She seems to mock !

ZARA.

I know her not, my lord.
She has been here these seven Paschal Days,
And thus appears to all, absent and strange,
As with an evil spirit made distressed ;
She would not, we will hope, have tasted wine
Before the hour of noon.

ELI.

It must be so ; —
For these are evil times, and my heart melts
Oft as I think of Israel's growing sin ;
I tremble for my people.

ZARA.

Look, my lord,—
Still she pollutes yon Holy Place of God,
With base effrontery ! Shall some be called,
To drive her from this sacred court ?

ELI.

Not yet.
She may be moved of God, though much I doubt.
Hast thou her name ?

ZARA.

I cannot tell, my lord.
She speaks to none, and shuns the worshippers.
I hear she comes from Ramah.

ELI.

Ramathaim ?

But I remember. ——

She has come before,
These many years, to Shiloh's solemn feasts.
She is Elkanah's wife, — a holy man,
And one of Levi's separated tribe.
I trust she will not bring his name disgrace.
These many years she has come hither thrice,
With mien more strange on each returning feast.
I will now question her, and learn the truth,
Whether she be with holy fervors moved,
Or one of Belial's daughters bold in sin.
I fear to prove the worse.

HANNAH—(*praying again, not audibly, and urgently gesticulating.*)

O LORD of Hosts,
Now from Thy mercy-seat, towards which I pray,
Within the Holiest Place, incline Thine ear !
Behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens are
Thine,
Yet Thou hast chosen this Thine earthly house,
To shew Thy pity, and to help our fears !
Here do I offer to Thy love my vow : —
If Thou Thine handmaid wilt indeed regard,

And not forget Thy lowly servant's cry,
 To look on my severe affliction, LORD,
 And to remember all its bitterness,
 But wilt fulfil 'Thine handmaid's heart's desire,
 Then to Thy worship I return the gift,—
 The gift most precious from Thy goodness sent,
 The worthiest offering for JEHOVAH's praise ;
 The boy I will devote a Nazarite,¹⁶
 There shall no razor come upon his head,
 And he shall serve within Thy Holy House,
 To do Thy pleasure, LORD, for evermore !
 Let God be witness to the vow I breathe,¹⁷
 Between His altar and His inner shrine —
 These holiest places to confirm the oath ;
 Hear, O JEHOVAH, Thy poor handmaid's voice,
 On Thee I cast my grief, in Thee I rest !

*(She turns away to leave the Court, passing
 near to Eli, and speaking to herself.)*

Behold, in this communion with my God
 I find relief, in every time of wo,
 From Him proceeds my spirit's sacred peace ;
 It comes, with such refreshing purity,
 Upon my soul, as, in the sultry heat,
 Low summer winds ——

OLEL — *(interrupting her.)*¹⁸

Ho, woman, thou art base !
 A child of Belial ! and thou dost blaspheme,

With guilty revelry, JEHOVAH's face !
Quit thou His presence !

ELI — (*confirming the lad's reproach.*)

Woman, why is this,
That thou hast dared to thus despise the LORD,
E'en in the Tabernacle's hallowed court ?
For shame ! put thou away thy wine from thee ; —
How long wilt thou be drunken ?

HANNAH — (*reverently inclining
herself to the High-Priest and Judge.*)

No, my lord,
Thou hast considered not thy handmaid right.
I am, alas ! a woman sorrowful,
And tried in spirit ; I have tasted grief ;
Not wine, nor strong drink, have I mixed, but tears ;
In weeping, fasting, and entreating, still,
I have poured out my soul before the LORD.
Reproach me not, I pray, here in the sight
Of Belial's daughters, who forget our God,
Nor count me one that loves their evil deeds ;

(*Zara and her associates hastily leave the
tabernacle.*)

For I am one of Israel's chosen race,
And, out of the abundance of my grief,
My anxious meditation and complaint,
I hitherto have spoken.

ELI.

Go in peace !

I see, my daughter, I have judged thee wrong ;
But, since my people do corrupt their ways,
I have become suspicious. Pardon me ;
And may the God of Israel, whom we serve,
Grant the petition thou hast asked of Him !
My daughter, go in peace !

HANNAH.

I thank my lord,
That thou hast judged thine handmaid's cause
aright ;
Hereafter give me grace before my lord.

(She retires from the Tabernacle.)

ELI — *(left alone.)*

May the Great Judge of all forgive the haste,
Wherewith I now have pained this faithful heart ;
May He fulfil, in mercy, her request !
I judged her wrong, when she did ask of God.

(He pauses, in deep reflection.)

New thoughts crowd on my mind. She asked of
God !
Perchance our nation's hope hangs on her faith ; —

Perchance our Israel's future glory 's wrapped,
Like the small germ, in that meek woman's
prayer.

O God, on Thee we trust ; — Thy will be done !

(*A pause.*)

But hark ! I hear that plaintive voice again, —
Its low, sad tones, — now murmuring patient
faith,
Now breathing hope. There 's comfort in her
song.

(*Hannah, having just passed out of the Gate
of the Tabernacle, is heard, singing.*)

Thou,
King Divine,
Hast heard Thy daughter's vow ;
And I am Thine !
But ah !
Thy secret counsels rule, I know not how,
Dread JAH !

Now,
To Thy will,
With quiet trust, I bow !
But looking still
Above,
I know the Godhead-glories round Thy brow
Are LOVE !

ACT IV.

SCENE I.¹⁹

Ramah. At the house of Elkanah, in the latter part of the afternoon, at the Circumcision of the Infant Samuel, about forty days before the Feast of the Passover next following that when the former Acts occurred. The Company is conversing with Elkanah and Hannah, until Mohel enters; and the Service is commenced with the chanting, by Mohel and the Company, responsively, of the Song of the Israelites as recorded in Exodus xv. 1—18, 21.

MOHEL.

I will sing unto the LORD,²⁰
He hath triumphed gloriously :

COMPANY.

Horse and rider, by His word,
He hath thrown into the sea.

MOHEL.

Him, my saving strength, I praise,
He is Israel's consolation :

COMPANY.

Loud to Him our song we raise,
He is Israel's sure salvation.

MOHEL.

Him, my God, I glorify,
In His holy habitation :

COMPANY.

He, our fathers' God, on high,
Reigns supreme o'er every nation.

CHORUS.

O sing ye to the LORD, for He hath triumphed
gloriously,
The war-horse and his rider He hath thrown into
the sea !

MOHEL.

As a mighty man of war,
In His strength JEHOVAH came :

COMPANY.

All His foes he smote afar,
Great JEHOVAH is His name.

MOHEL.

Pharaoh's chariots and his host
He hath buried in the deep :

COMPANY.

All his chosen captains, lost,
In the Red Sea drowned, sleep.

MOHEL.

Waves have covered every rank,
None pass over, no, not one :

COMPANY.

In the rushing floods they sank,
To the lowest depths, as stone.

CHORUS.

O sing ye to the LORD, for He hath triumphed
gloriously,
The war-horse and his rider He hath thrown into
the sea !

MOHEL.

Thy right hand, O LORD, is glorious,
From Thy power the people flee :

COMPANY.

Thy right hand, O LORD, victorious,
Hath destroyed the enemy.

MOHEL.

In the greatness of Thine ire,
Thou o'erwhelmedst them with trouble :

COMPANY.

Sending forth Thy wrath, like fire,
Thou consumedst them as stubble.

CHORUS.

O sing ye to the LORD, for He hath triumphed
gloriously,
The war-horse and his rider He hath thrown into
the sea !

MOHEL.

At Thy blast the waters leap,
All their waves together band :

COMPANY.

Floods rise upright as an heap,
Emerald walls on either hand :

MOHEL AND COMPANY.

From the dry ground rising steep,
All congealed the sea-depths stand.

MOHEL.

Egypt said, I will pursue,
I will overtake their train :

COMPANY.

I will seize their spoil, my due,
I will triumph in their slain :

MOHEL AND COMPANY.

I will draw my sword anew,
I will make them slaves again.

MOHEL.

'Thou, LORD, blowedst with Thy breath,
And the sea enclosed them all :

COMPANY.

Lo, as lead, they sink to death,
Where the mighty waters fall !

CHORUS.

O sing ye to the LORD, for He hath triumphed
gloriously,
The war-horse and his rider He hath thrown into
the sea !

MOHEL.

Who, among the gods, doth shine,
Like to Thee, JEHOVAH, great ?

COMPANY.

Who hath majesty like Thine,
Glorious in Thy saints that wait ?

MOHEL AND COMPANY.

Reverend in Thy praise Divine,
Doing wonders in Thy hate ?

CHORUS.

O sing ye to the LORD, for He hath triumphed
gloriously,
The war-horse and his rider He hath thrown into
the sea !

MOHEL.

Thy right hand the billow rends,
At Thy voice the oppressors die :

COMPANY.

Earth her secret bars distends,
In the abyss the wicked lie.

MOHEL.

Thou hast led us forth, at length,
Thou, with judgments, sav'st the lowly :

COMPANY.

Thou hast guided us, in strength,
To the dwelling of the holy.

CHORUS.

O sing ye to the LORD, for He hath triumphed
gloriously,
The war-horse and his rider He hath thrown into
the sea !

MOHEL.

For JEHOVAH's wonders' sake,
All the nations round shall quail :

COMPANY.

Palestina sorrows take,
Her inhabitants shall wail :

MOHEL.

Edom's princes then shall quake,
When our hosts the battle hail :

COMPANY.

Moab's mighty men shall shake,
Trembling all their force assail :

MOHEL AND COMPANY.

Canaan's kings submission make,
In their hearts their courage fail.

CHORUS.

O sing ye to the LORD, for He hath triumphed
gloriously,
The war-horse and his rider He hath thrown into
the sea !

MOHEL.

Fear and dread shall fall upon them,
Israel safe shall dwell alone :

COMPANY.

By Thy greatness, LORD, we won them,
By Thine arm they're still as stone :

MOHEL.

Till Thy people, O JEHOVAH,
Shall possess the promised land :

COMPANY.

Till the people shall pass over,
Thou hast purchased with Thy hand.

MOHEL.

Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them
In the mount of ancient story :

COMPANY.

O JEHOVAH, none shall daunt them,
In Thy place of dwelling hoary :

MOHEL AND COMPANY.

Thou, O LORD, Thy home shalt grant them,
Thou shalt stablish them with glory.

CHORUS.

O sing ye to the LORD, for He hath triumphed
gloriously,
The war-horse and his rider He hath thrown into
the sea !

MOHEL.

GOD JEHOVAH, throned in light,
Holy hosts of heaven adore :

COMPANY.

GOD JEHOVAH, Israel's might,
Reigns on earth forevermore.

CHORUS.

O sing ye to the LORD, for He hath triumphed
gloriously,
The war-horse and his rider He hath thrown into
the sea !

MOHEL — (*standing over the child,
who is held in the arms of the Godfather, a friend
of Elkanah, called "the Witness," or "Master
of the Covenant."*)

O God, our King, and King of all the world,
We bless Thy holy name for Thy vast works ;
And for this special grace we praise Thee, LORD,
That, by Thy wise commandments and Thy word,
Thou sanctifiest us a holy race,
And hast bestowed on us this covenant sign,
To seal us by Thy name in Israel !

(*The Sacramental Rite is then performed, after
which the father offers this prayer :*)

ELKANAH.

GOD of our fathers, here accept our thanks,
As for thy wonders by our fathers wrought,
And for the goodly land of corn and wine,
Of milk and honey, our inheritance,
So for Thy favors to our children given,
And for Thy covenant with this infant boy !
JEHOVAH bless the child, and give him grace,
Prolong his days within this promised land,
In health, and peace, and full prosperity ;
May he Thy statutes love, and keep Thy law,
And see Thy house of worship beauteous built ;
The LORD take vengeance on his enemies,
And put the foes of Israel all to shame ;
Write Thou his name, O God, upon Thy roll,
Among the names of righteous men and just ;
And give him wisdom for Thy service' sake,
And for Thy people's good in after time !
O GOD, Thy will be done ! ²¹

COMPANY — (*addressing the father.*)

The child is sealed,
He wears the sign of great JEHOVAH's love.
Do thou thy duty, and watch all his ways ;
Cause thou thy son to enter in the Law,
In Marriage with a daughter of our race,
And in Good Works, e'en as he enters now

The covenant of our father Abraham.

JEHOVAH bless His son !

MOHEL — (*speaking to the mother.*)

Name thou this child.²²

HANNAH.

Long did I wait on God, who heard my voice,
And sent a gracious answer to my prayer.
Samuel I called his name, when first he lived,
In token of JEHOVAH's bounteous love,
E'en first, before his father had embraced,²³
To own, and bless, the babe ; — and now, once
more,
In memory of my God, I call his name
Samuel, because *I asked him of the LORD*.

MOHEL — (*wetting the lips of the child with wine.*)

His name is *Samuel*. Henceforth he will prove,
That, while our God abhors iniquity,
His eyes are still on righteous Israel bent,
His ears are open, when the faithful pray.
JEHOVAH bless the babe, and fill his cup
With blessings of the earth, and heavenly gifts !
JEHOVAH bless the parents of the boy,

With length of days, and joy in this their child !
JEHOVAH bless these friends assembled here,
As each may need, and as His goodness prompts !
JEHOVAH bless our Israel in the land,
And prosper us, and glorify His name !

*(Mohel and the Company now chant or recite,
responsively, the 128th Psalm.)*

MOHEL.

O blest, thrice blest, is every one,²⁴
That fears the LORD, and loves His praise :

COMPANY.

That loves JEHOVAH God alone,
And walks in His most perfect ways !

MOHEL.

For thou shalt have prosperity,
Thy God will happiness impart :

COMPANY.

It shall be ever well with thee,
And God's own blessings fill thy heart.

MOHEL.

Thy wife, a tender, fruitful vine,
Shall grace and beautify thy home :

COMPANY.

Thy children, olive-plants, shall twine
Round thee, and round thy table come.

MOHEL.

Behold, the LORD this man shall bless,
That fears His holy word and name :

COMPANY.

JEHOVAH shall this man confess,
And all his adversaries shame !

MOHEL.

The LORD, from His most holy place,
Shall bless thee in His heritage :

COMPANY.

And with the brightness of His face
His people bless from age to age.

MOHEL.

Yea, in thy happy latter day,
Thy children's children thou shalt see :

COMPANY.

Sweet peace on Israel ever stay,
And GOD our own JEHOVAH be !

(The Witness gives the child to the Godmother, or female attendant, who returns him into the arms of his mother ; and the Company retire, saying, one by one, to the father, as follows :)

Long life and all of happiness be thine,
And as thy joy is full in this young child,
Thus be thou present at his marriage-feast !

(In the Court, after this, they are entertained at the table of the hospitable Elkanah.)

SCENE II.

*In the same apartment of the house of Elkanah,
the guests having just retired to the Feast.
Elkanah, Hannah with her babe.*

ELKANAH.

At last, my Hannah, thy desire is found,
And, treasured safe in thy maternal arms,
Thou fold'st to thy breast this gift of God, —
Thine only son, — the answer to thy prayer, —
Thy child, — now sealed the child of God, and
 heir
To glorious promises in Isaac's race.
I give thee joy !

HANNAH.

My husband, thanks to thee !
Thou long hast known my sorrow, secret borne,
For thou, my other heart, the burden shared ;
But God, all-gracious, has removed its weight,
And granted blessings, more than tongue can
 speak.
So that this evening I have felt constrained,
Before the presence of our friends convened,

To tell aloud His goodness to my soul;
And still I bless Him.

ELKANAH.

Well may He be thanked,
And I will add my tribute to His praise,
Who blesses me with thee. Thanks to His name,
That He imparts His grace to her I love,
And has bestowed on me this precious gift!
Here do I vow an offering at His shrine
More than the Law requires, that He may know,
By such a token, all my thankfulness;
For though He sees our hearts, and does not need
That we should tell Him, when we love Him best,
He yet accepts what our affection brings,—
Just as our parents smiled, when once to them
We brought our gifts of childhood.

HANNAH.

He will own,
And will reward, thy faithful piety.
My husband, it is right we should rejoice,
For this is special grace;—so speaks my heart.
Amid communings with the hidden God,
I learn, that, in His wondrous Providence,
He overrules all things, to bless His saints,

Who love Him ;— and, I know, we love Him best.
Deep is my joy to-day ; — but ever deep
Has been my joy in God, through years now past.
Though long cast down, and proved with frequent tears,
I knew that God would bless me ; — and my trust
Was deepest joy.

ELKANAH.

Soon comes the Paschal Feast,
Returning in its annual course of love.
Last year thy tears were shed in Shiloh's court ;
Wilt thou this Feast present the infant boy,
And smile before our good high-priest ?

HANNAH.

Not now.
Within my arms three years I'll nurse the child,²⁵
As is the custom of the Jewish dames.
Then will I bring him to the Holy Place,
That he may there appear before the LORD,
And there abide forever. For I feel
That this young child will live, to serve the LORD,
To be a Judge and Prophet in the land,
And to prepare a way, upon the earth,
For Judah's Sceptre and for Jacob's Star —

Sweet peace and great salvation evermore.
I feel it; — and this strong presentiment
Is as JEHOVAH's voice, heard in my heart, —
JEHOVAH speaks, — and I will trust in God.

ELKANAH.

Do thou what seems thee good, and tarry here;
Only the LORD establish all His word;
In thee I trust; — and I will trust in God.
But I must leave thee now, to join the guests²⁶
Who wait my coming at the festal board.
Rest with the babe, and God will bless thy sleep.

(*Elkanah retires.*)

HANNAH—(*alone.*)

How calm, unbroken, blessed is my peace!
No doubts disturb, no fears exhaust the soul;
In waiting for the promise, often tried,
I clasp the Real now, and find my peace, —
Uninterrupted, satisfying peace.

Is this their endless peace, in that last home,
That better country, which the spirit seeks?
Where every promise whispered to the soul —
Each holy thought — each thrill of yearning
love —

Each purpose for our own or others' good —
Each dread of guilt, and hatred of the wrong —
Each impulse to the future or to God —
(For all are surest promises of heaven,
Heard ever softly by the soul's true sense,
Celestial music in a world of moans,)
Finds its fulfilment; and the spirit rests,
From all fatigues of time, and human toil,
Pillowed in bliss of everlasting peace?

O that the world knew God, and in *its* heart
Felt all the love that lives in His Divine!
That war and hate might perish from the earth,
And man receive JEHOVAH'S Love and Peace!
God bless my boy; — and bless, in him, the world!

(*She sings.*)

My baby, sleep! ²⁷
Thy mother's patient arm
My babe will keep;
And He will save from harm,
Who rules the myriad hosts on high!

My baby, sleep!
Thy mother, for her woes,
No more shall weep;
Her heart with transport glows;
God heard His lowly daughter's cry!

My baby, sleep !
Along the glorious line,
In vision deep,
I see the Sceptre shine,
From Judah's endless majesty !

My baby, sleep !
To thee the Gentiles all
Submissive creep ;
Low at thy feet they fall ;
Beneath thy throne the kingdoms lie !

My baby, sleep !
Thy power, great Prince of Peace,
O'er earth shall sweep ;
The oppressor's strength will cease,
The sinner's pang, the mourner's sigh !

My baby, sleep !
Safely my lamb I hold ;
And Israel's sheep
Thou'lt watch within their fold,
To save from dread idolatry !

My baby, sleep !
From Judah's valleys wide,
And mountains steep,
Whence Jordan's waters glide,
Salvation through the world shall fly !

My baby, sleep !
JEHOVAH guard thy way,
From morning's peep,
Through all thy mortal day,
To His — thy soul's — eternity !

A C T V.

SCENE I.

Shiloh. In the Court of the Tabernacle, at the south side of the great Altar, on the morning of the first day of the Feast of the Passover, Samuel being a few weeks above three years old. Elkanah, Hannah, Infant Samuel.

INFANT SAMUEL.

Is this God's house, my mother?

HANNAH.

Yes, my child.

Here dwells the glorious God of Israel,
As thou hast learned.

INFANT SAMUEL.

Mother, does God dwell here?
I thought JEHOVAH dwelt in highest heaven,—
So thou didst tell me;—and I see Him not
Within these narrow walls.

HANNAH.

Yet God is here ;
His Spirit stays, my son, within these walls,
And in this place, Himself Invisible,
He listens to the prayers of humble hearts ;
Here only on the earth is He confessed,
And here alone does He confess and bless
True worshippers. And hither we have come,
Thy sire, and I, to bring our little boy,
That we may offer thee before the LORD ;
And pray that He will bless thee out of heaven ;
Make thee His child ; and, in His Holy Place,
Use thee His honored servant all thy days.
Each morn and night, repeating them with care,
I fixed these things upon thy memory ;
Now tell me, my dear son, dost thou love God ?
And wilt thou still serve Him, as thou didst boast
At Ramah ?

INFANT SAMUEL.

Yes, my mother, I love God ;
And if His Holy Spirit fills this place,
I will be glad to live here all my days.
Thou say'st, dear mother, I am but a gift,
JEHOVAH'S work, — His child, as well as thine ;
And I do love Him, God and Father too,

Who made me His own son, and gave me thee,
To be my mother.

HANNAH.

But He loved thee first,
And made thee for His service' sake, my child ; —
That Heavenly Father, who thus honors thee,
Should have the first affection of His son.

INFANT SAMUEL.

Yet, mother, it seems very strange to me,
That God, so high and great, inhabits here ;
I thought His house, far up on Shiloh's mount,
Did spread its spacious courts all gloriously,
And shone, in hallowed splendor, o'er the land.
This morning early, when we left our home,
To journey to the Feast, while all the stars
Were twinkling in the sky, on every side,
Ere they had faded in the paly dawn,
I thought of God.

It seemed as if the sky
Were but a blue and beauteous vault around,
Shutting up all the world, and shutting out
The empyrean, thou hast told of, from our sight ; —
Beyond, in boundless space, that glory shines,

And there JEHOVAH lives ; — this firmament,
Pierced with a thousand holes, the stars these holes,
Lets in to us some rays of that bright world,
Enough to illumine the darkness of our earth,
Enough to show *its* brightness.

O how bright
The empyrean world of God, where is no sky,
Nor stars, but light, like this of stars, immense,
Pervading, soft, and shining evermore !
It seemed as if such light were round His house,
The light of stars, diffused, — not radiant points, —
Wreathing, about His dwelling-place below,
The upper glory of His heavenly throne.

HANNAH.

My child, no eye of sense hath gazed on God,
His glory may no mortal see and live ;
The stars' blue vault, protective, shuts us in
From high JEHOVAH's face ; — else should we die.
But the same Spirit lives within this house,
That hallowed thy young heart at Ramathaim,
And gave God's blessing to thine infant prayer.
Then thou didst love Him, where no glory shone ;
The Same is present here without His light,
In goodness, that His people perish not.
This house we call JEHOVAH's ; it is His,

(For all is His,) — and ours, — our Father's
home, —

Where, when we come, we feel our brotherhood,
And His Paternal love ; and pay our vows
Of filial reverence at His sacred shrine,
Claiming His promise, while we keep His word.
Wilt thou, then, serve JEHOVAH in this house ?
And, in the latter day, thy soul shall spring,
Free from its weaker sense, beyond the sky,
And myriad trembling stars, up to that world
Of boundless light and joy — the upper heaven ;
Thy spirit's eye shall lift itself, not hurt,
On God unveiled ; and with His seraph host,
Thou 'lt gaze on th' open glory, and be blest
Forever.

INFANT SAMUEL.

Oh, my mother, in this house,
As thou hast taught me, I will serve the LORD ;
And He will bless me, in the latter day,
With thee.

But what are these, this central pile, —
And yonder veil, which seems to hide from us
Some precious holy charge ?

HANNAH.

That is the veil
Which hides the Holy Place from common sight;
Behind it is the Holiest Place of all,
That holds the Manna in its Vase of Gold,
The Rod of Aaron, and the sacred Ark;
There, too, are kept the Tables of the Law,
The Mercy-Seat of winged Cherubim,
And there the grand Shechinah is displayed,
Before the High Priest, in the solemn day
Of full propitiation for our sin,
When all the tribes mourn out the annual fast.
This pile, o'erlaid with brass, and stained with
 blood,
Is the great Altar, where the people lay,
To offer, through the priests, their sacrifice.
Between this Altar and that Holy Place,
Beyond the Brazen Laver standing nigh,
Ere thou wast born, I vowed thee to the LORD.

But see, thy father comes, bringing with him
The Consecration Offering for our son, —
A fatling of three years, and flour, and wine.
He leaves them with the priest; and turns this way
To join us.

(*Elkanah enters.*)

ELKANAH.

When the sacrifice is made,
We'll go, where Eli, next the outer gate,
Sits on the seat of judgment ; and present,
Into his hands, our own most precious gift,
Our darling boy, —best offering for the LORD.
How sayest thou, my little son, to this ?
Wilt thou serve God, or go with us again
Home to our Ramah ?

INFANT SAMUEL.

Father, I love God,
And I will stay and serve Him, as ye will ;
For mother tells me, I'm the child of God,
More His, than hers or thine ; and I love Him,
Just as I love thee, father, in my heart,
Or my dear mother, only with more awe,
So great and still unseen is God.

HANNAH.

Dear child,
Thou shalt stay here ; and three times every year,
At each most solemn feast, and oftener,
Thy sire and I, not far, will cross the hills,
To visit here, in Shiloh's house, our son ;
And every morn and night our prayers will rise,
That God may bless our absent boy beloved.

SCENE II.

Another part of the Court, near the outer Gate, by the seat of Eli. Elkanah, Hannah, Infant Samuel, Eli.

HANNAH.

Hear, O my lord ! as thy soul lives, my lord,
I am the woman who stood by thee here,
Praying unto the LORD, in earnest prayer,
Forgetful of the place, and curious eyes,
But four short years ago ; then thou didst bless
Thy handmaid's supplication, and to-day
We come to bring an offering to our God.
For this young child I prayed ; JEHOVAH heard,
And gave me my petition asked of Him,
According to the word His servant spake.
Now, therefore, I have lent him to the LORD,
And, while he lives, he shall be lent to God.
He was obtained by prayer ; we call his name
Samuel, in memory of the favor given.
JEHOVAH's gift we now return to thee,
His holy Judge, to wait upon thy hest,
And serve, in sacred offices, the LORD.

ELI.

Well I remember thee, and all thy prayers,
My daughter ; daily, through these four long years,
My thoughts have turned to thee. While my own
 hopes,
One on another, all have faded out,
On thy true tears, in this degenerate age,
My hopes have leaned, for Israel's future stay.
Here I accept your offering for the LORD,
To be a Prophet in JEHOVAH's name,
Perchance, and Israel's Saviour.

ELKANAH.

 Now, my lord,
We crave a benediction from thy hand, —
A pledge that God accepts our humble vow, —
Upon thy servants' head.

HANNAH — (*to Samuel.*)

 Kneel down, my son,
Between me and thy father, while my lord
Shall bless us here.

(*They kneel.*)

ELI.

 JEHOVAH bless the child,
Both for the child's own good, and Israel's peace !

JEHOVAH bless these parents, and bestow
On them such gifts as Israel's children seek, —
The choicest gifts of home, — and many joys,
In payment for the loan now lent to God!
Rise ye, my children.

(*They rise.*)

HANNAH — (*addressing Samuel.*)

Samuel, thou art God's ;
Thy mother's hopes are now fulfilled ; and thou,
My son, art consecrate, an holy one ;
Thou wilt abide forever with the LORD ;
And He will honor thee. We, too, will come,
To see thee, as we promised, often here ;
And when this Feast comes round, in every year,
I'll bring my little boy a tunic, new,
And made by my own hands, of linen wrought, —
A token that his mother loves her son.
Weep not, my child, —

INFANT SAMUEL.

My mother, I weep not,
Unwilling to be here with God ; but now
I weep to think that thou must go away,
And leave me ; on thy breast I've heard thy song,
And softly slept, dear mother, till to-day.
Thou lovest God ; and I will love Him, too,
And serve Him for thy sake.

HANNAH.

Dear babe, trust Him ;
He is thy Father, and He loves thee well,
More than thy mother's heart can love her boy ;
And we will come —

ELI.

My daughter, he is God's ;
And God will send His holy angel down ;
He will support his son !

See, now, he smiles ; —
God gives him strength ; — he wipes away his
tears !
My daughter, in thy faith I much confide ;
Thy faith is true, and pure, and worthy those
Who come from Abraham ; bless thou the LORD.

HANNAH.

My father, now my heart is filled with strength,
I feel a sudden courage nerve my soul, —
A holy energy pervades my frame, —
My spirit burns, as with prophetic fire, —
JEHOVAH is my God ! I bless the LORD !

*(Turning towards the Holy Place, she chants,
filled with the prophetic rapture:)*

To the glorious JEHOVAH ²⁸
I sing,
Earth and heaven reigning over,
Our King ;
For my spirit is free from her woes,
And my mouth is enlarged o'er my foes !

To JEHOVAH my voice
I will raise,
And my heart shall rejoice
In His praise ;
God gives me the horn of dominion,
In Him I delight,
My soul, springing strong on her pinion,
Exults in her flight ;
JEHOVAH alone has supreme exaltation,
O God ! I rejoice in Thy wondrous salvation ! ²⁹

None other, O JEHOVAH, ever,
Of the mighty ones that be,
Before Thy shining throne,
In holiness
Has trod ;
In all the world there shall be never
Any other, LORD, but Thee,
Thou art the Rock alone,
And Thee we bless,
O God !

Ah! vain is human pride,
And the tongue that boasteth loudly!
For the mouth that speaketh proudly,
By arrogance is tried!
JEHOVAH, God of knowledge, and our Guide, is
crowned;
The lives and destinies of men His counsels bound.

For He breaketh the bows
Of the brave,
And the valiant o'erthrows
In the grave,
But He girdeth with might
Them that faint in the fight;
For the full He hireth out for bread,
And the hungry are with plenty fed;
For the mother of children is stript of her boys,
And the childless is blest with the mother's deep
joys.

JEHOVAH killeth,
And none may revive,
He bringeth down to the place of death;
JEHOVAH willeth,
And maketh alive,
He bringeth up by his Spirit's breath.

JEHOVAH maketh poor,
The rich JEHOVAH maketh ;
The humble shall endure,
But to the ground he shaketh
The lofty and secure ;
For the wicked His vengeance taketh,
But the lowly He ne'er forsaketh.

The weak and the distressed
He raiseth from the dust,
The beggar and oppressed,
Who place in Him their trust ;
To set them on a royal seat,
Where kings their presence haste to greet,
Where tributary princes meet,
And offer homage at their feet ;
To give them the riches of earth for their own,
To make them inherit a glorious throne.

On Chaos majesty was cast,
And splendid beauty sudden past,
When God appeared,
Divinely grand ;
For all earth's pillars, high and vast,
JEHOVAH reared ;
All firm they stand,
And, safe, eternally shall last ;
On them the world is founded fast,
By His right hand ;
Let God be feared !

JEHOVAH reigns, in Sovereign awe,
To pardon or to curse ;
JEHOVAH sways His righteous law,
Throughout the universe.

He directs His people's goings,
While the wicked all shall perish
In the wrathful overflowings
Of His stormy judgments falling ;
But the holy He will cherish,
For He keeps His saints who love Him.
Ah ! the sinner's doom appalling !
Death's dark silence broods above him !

Shall mortal man prevail ?
With impudence unblushing,
JEHOVAH's strength assail,
Weak creature of the sod ?
Behold, in vengeance flushing,
Where burns their fiery trail,
Quick at JEHOVAH's nod,
His angel armies rushing !
Alas ! all strength shall fail,
Which dares His iron rod,
The adversaries crushing !
JEHOVAH ! thou art God !

Let not the wise man boast in wisdom's lore,³⁰
Nor let the rich, in riches' golden store ;
Let him, that glorieth, glory in the skill
To understand and know JEHOVAH's will,
Whose righteousness exceeds all finite worth,
Who executes true justice in the earth.

Lo, mercy ceases !
Dread blackness palls the sky,
Swift spreading tempests fly,
Winds wailing hurry by,
And fear increases !
See, ragged lightnings flashing !
Hear, heavy thunders crashing !
JEHOVAH's bolts are dashing
His foes in pieces !
From heaven JEHOVAH smites the sinner's soul,
On earth's remotest bounds His awful judgments
roll.

But hark !
Where judgment-thunders pealed, another sound !
The skies no more are dark ;
A strain
Of angel music floats the world around !
And Mercy's voice again : —

Glory to God in highest heaven,
Good will and peace to men be given !
JEHOVAH'S Only Son
Has left His home,
Salvation's work is done,
The CHRIST has come !
Great GODHEAD'S strength His kingdom shall
sustain,
Earth's nations all shall own Messiah's royal
claim,
In endless life and bliss the Anointed King shall
reign,
Let heaven and earth give glory to His ever-
glorious name !

NOTES.

“Sed et nomen justi hujus est Helchana, quod interpretatur POSSESSIO DEI. . . . Iste ergo laudabilis vir habuit duas uxores. Nomen uni Anna, et nomen secundæ Fenenna. Quid ergo hæc in se sacramenti contineant, videamus: Fenenna interpretatur *conversio*, Anna autem interpretatur *gratia*. Unusquisque ergo nostrum, qui vult effici *possessio Dei*, istas sibi duas jungat uxores, et cum ipsis sibi nuptias celebret. *Primam* sibi jungat, quæ nobilior est et generosior, *gratiam*. *Secundæ* vero conjungatur Fenennæ: id est, *conversioni*: quia post gratiam credulitatis emendatio fit morum et vitæ conversio. . . . Filios habet Fenenna, sed qui non assistant Deo. Neque enim tales esse possunt filii conversionis ut assistant et adhæreant Deo. Nec tamen inanes et penitus alieni sunt a rebus Dei. Accipiunt namque partes de sacrificiis divinis, et edunt de hostiis Dei. Unusquisque ergo nostrum primò convertitur a peccato, et ex conversione generat opera justitiæ. . . . Et nunc Anna generat filium. Quem filium? Samuelem, inquit, qui Deo assistit, de quo in Psalmis dicitur: ‘Moses et Aaron in sacerdotibus ejus, et Samuel in his qui invocant nomen ejus.’ Sed et Jeremias dicit: ‘Si steterint Moses et Samuel in conspectu meo, non dimittam eis.’ Si ergo tantus et talis est filius gratiæ.”

ORIGEN, *Homilia prima in Librum Regnorum*,
as translated and preserved by Rufinus.

NOTES.

NOTE 1. PAGE 3.

ACT I. "Now there was a certain man of Ramathaim-zophim, of Mount Ephraim, and his name was Elkanah, the son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuph, an Ephrathite (compare 1 Chron. vi. 33—38): and he had two wives; the name of the one was Hannah, and the name of the other Peninnah: and Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children. And this man went up out of his city, yearly, to worship and to sacrifice unto the LORD of Hosts in Shiloh. And the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, the priests of the LORD, were there. And when the time was that Elkanah offered, he gave to Peninnah, his wife, and to all her sons and her daughters, portions: but unto Hannah he gave a worthy portion;* for he loved Hannah: but the LORD had shut up her womb. And her adversary (or rival) also provoked her sore, for to make her fret, because the LORD had shut up her womb. And as he did so, year by year, when she went up to the house of the LORD, so she provoked her: therefore she wept, and did not eat. Then said Elkanah, her husband, to her, Hannah, why weepest thou? and why eatest thou not?

* "But to Hannah he gave one portion, because she was without children." *Septuagint*.

and why is thy heart grieved? am not I better to thee than ten sons?"—1 *Samuel*, i. 1-8.

ACT II.

ACT III. "So Hannah rose up, after they had eaten in Shiloh, and after they had drunk. Now Eli the priest sat upon a seat (or throne) by a post of the temple (or tabernacle) of the LORD. And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the LORD, and wept sore. And she vowed a vow, and said, O LORD of Hosts! if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man-child, then I will give him unto the LORD all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head.* And it came to pass, as she continued praying before the LORD, that Eli marked her mouth. Now Hannah, she spake in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard: therefore Eli thought she had been drunken. And Eli said unto her,† How long wilt thou be drunken? put away thy wine from thee. And Hannah answered and said, No, my lord, I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit (or hard, tried, of spirit): I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but have poured out my soul before the LORD.‡ Count not thine handmaid for a daughter of Belial:§ for out of the abundance of my complaint

* See Note 16.

† See Note 18.

‡ "Neither wine nor inebriating drink has been *poured out unto me*, but I have *poured out my soul unto the Lord*. There is a great deal of delicacy and point in this vindication." *Dr. Adam Clarke*.

§ Or, "Give not thy handmaid (to reproach) before the faces of

(or meditation) and grief have I spoken hitherto. Then Eli answered and said, Go in peace : and the God of Israel grant thee thy petition that thou hast asked of him. And she said, Let thine handmaid find grace in thy sight. So the woman went her way, and did eat, and her countenance was no more sad.”—*Chapter i. 9—18.*

ACT IV. “And they rose up in the morning early, and worshipped before the LORD, and returned, and came to their house to Ramah : . . . and the LORD remembered her. Wherefore it came to pass . . . that she bare a son, and called his name Samuel, saying, Because I have asked him of the LORD. And the man Elkanah, and all his house, went up to offer unto the LORD the yearly sacrifice, and his vow. But Hannah went not up ; for she said unto her husband, I will not go up until the child be weaned, and then I will bring him, that he may appear before the LORD, and there abide forever. And Elkanah, her husband, said unto her, Do what seemeth thee good ; tarry until thou have weaned him ; only the LORD establish his word. So the woman abode, and gave her son suck until she weaned him.”—*Chapter i. 19—23.*

ACT V. “And when she had weaned him, she took him up with her,* with three bullocks (or a bullock of three years old), and one ephah of flour, and a bottle of wine, and brought him unto the house of the

the daughters of Belial.” *A. Clarke.* The presence of these “daughters of Belial,” even in the tabernacle, at this period, is evident from the tenor of the history in the former portion of the First Book of Samuel.

* See Note 25.

LORD in Shiloh : and the child was young. And they slew a (the) bullock, and brought the child to Eli. And she said, O my lord ! as thy soul liveth, my lord, I am the woman that stood by thee here, praying unto the LORD. For this child I prayed ; and the LORD hath given me my petition which I asked of him. Therefore also I have lent him to the LORD ; as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the LORD. And he (she) worshipped the LORD there.”—*Chapter i. 24—28.*

“ And Hannah prayed, and said :
 My heart rejoiceth in the LORD,
 Mine horn (or dominion) is exalted in the LORD ;
 My mouth is enlarged over mine enemies ;
 Because I rejoice in thy salvation.
 There is none holy as the LORD ;
 For there is none beside thee :
 Neither is there any rock like our God.
 Talk no more so exceeding proudly ;
 Let not arrogancy come out of your mouth :
 For the LORD is a God of knowledge,
 And by him actions are (directed or) weighed.
 The bows of the mighty men are broken,
 And they that stumbled are girded with strength.
 They that were full have hired out themselves for bread ;
 And they that were hungry (being fed) ceased* (to
 suffer) :
 So that the barren hath borne seven ;

* Jerome translates this verse : “ Saturati prius, pro pane se locaverunt : et famelici saturati sunt.” Augustin quotes it as follows : “ Pleni panibus (i. e. the Jews, as he expounds the phrase) minorati sunt ; et esurientes (the Gentiles) transierunt terram (as the Christian Church).”

And she that hath many children is waxed feeble.
The LORD killeth, and maketh alive :
He bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up.
The LORD maketh poor, and maketh rich :
He bringeth low, and lifteth up.
He raiseth up the poor out of the dust,
And lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill,
To set them among princes,
And to make them inherit the throne of glory :
For the pillars of the earth are the LORD's,
And he hath set the world upon them.
He will keep the feet of his saints,
And the wicked shall be silent in darkness ;
For by strength shall no man prevail.
The adversaries of the LORD shall be broken to pieces ; *
Out of heaven shall he thunder upon them :
The LORD shall judge the ends of the earth ;
And He shall give strength unto his king,
And exalt the horn of his anointed."—*Chapter ii. 1–10.*

"And Eli blessed Elkanah and his wife, and said,
The LORD give thee seed of this woman for the loan
which is lent to the LORD." *v. 20.*— "And they went
unto their own home, to Ramah, to the house of Elka-
nah." *vv. 11, 20.*— "But Samuel ministered unto the
LORD before Eli the priest, being a child, girded with a
linenephod." *vv. 11, 18.*— "Moreover his mother made
him a little coat, and brought it to him, from year to
year, when she came up with her husband to offer the
yearly sacrifice." *v. 19.*

The above passages are quoted from an edition of

* See note 30.

the Bible, by the Rev. T. W. Coit, D. D. ; and any other portions of Scripture, which may be inserted among these notes, will be copied from the same.

In the composition of the preceding pages, an effort has been made throughout, in the language of the several characters, to represent always the sense, and, when practicable, to use the very words, of the Scripture on which the poem is founded. Occasionally, where is a seeming departure from this rule, there is an attempt to illustrate more exactly the precise meaning of the original. The same observation applies to the translations of Scripture in the fourth and fifth Acts.

NOTE 2. PAGE 3.

Shiloh, or Silo, where the scene is laid, is "a famous city of Ephraim, twelve miles from Shechem, according to Eusebius, or ten, according to Jerome," and about twenty-three miles north of Jerusalem. "Here the tabernacle of the LORD was set up, when the Jews were settled in the country. The ark and the tabernacle continued at Shiloh, from A. M. 2560 to A. M. 2888, when the ark was taken by the Philistines, under the administration of the high-priest Eli. At Shiloh, Samuel began to prophesy." *Robinson's Calmet*.

The feast of the Passover was one of the three annual festivals, at which all the Jews were required to appear before the LORD, first at the tabernacle, and in a later age at the temple. It was continued seven days, from the fourteenth to the twenty-first of the month Abib, corresponding to the last of April or the first of May.

For a description of the tabernacle, see *Jahn's Archaeology*, section 328, translated by T. C. Upham.

NOTE 3. PAGE 4.

The wicked cease, &c. Job iii. 17-18.

The book of Job is by many critics supposed to have been given to the Jews by Moses, and is probably as old as that age. It has seemed to the writer, that the devotional Jewess and wife of a Levite would be familiar with the few sacred books of her people. Any Scriptural facts alluded to, or Scriptural passages quoted (besides those on which the poem is based), by the persons in these scenes, are from books belonging to that period, with one or two exceptions, in which the sentiment naturally clothes itself in the same language which represents it most exactly, refusing a change of expression, or in which the prophetic character of the speaker justifies a Prolepsis.

NOTE 4. PAGE 5.

And hope has been deferred, &c. Prov. xiii. 12.

It is not improbable that many of the proverbs of Solomon may have been in use, until he collected them with his own, giving to all the sanction of a Divine Wisdom.

NOTE 5. PAGE 7.

My husband, on Mount Ephraim thou hast seen.

The site of the Ramathaim-zophim, the residence of Elkanah, is not satisfactorily determined. It was on Mount Ephraim, as we learn in 1 Samuel, i. 1. It is generally supposed to be identical with Rama or Ramah, a city on the frontiers of Ephraim and Benjamin, situated a few (six or eight) miles north or north-west of Jerusalem, and about seventeen miles south of Shiloh.

NOTE 6. PAGE 8.

And therefore I had hoped, the Sceptred One.

David Kimchi, the learned Rabbi and commentator of the Jews, speaking of the age and song of Hannah, says, "There was a tradition among the Israelites, that a great King should arise in Israel." Compare Gen. xii. 3, xlix. 10, and Numb. xxiv. 17.

NOTE 7. PAGE 9.

I led thee, &c.

"About evening, the bridegroom, clothed in the festival robe, attended with a company of young men of about the same age, and cheered with songs and instrumental music, conducted from her father's house the bride, who was in like manner surrounded with virgins of her own age, to his father's house."

For a further account of the "celebration of nuptials," see *Jahn's Archaeology*, section 154.

NOTE 8. PAGE 10.

To muzzle not the ox that treads the corn.

The tenderness and benevolence of God are very beautifully developed in many precepts of the Mosaic Law.

NOTE 9. PAGE 11.

To seize our firstlings, &c.

The first and finest of the flocks and herds were required by the Jewish law for sacrifices, as the only proper testimony of respect and zeal for God.

NOTE 10. PAGE 13.

And bless Thee for Thy love, O LORD of Hosts!

The phrase, "JEHOVAH of hosts," or "LORD of Sabaoth," is used, for the first time in the Scriptures, in the First Book of Samuel. It is supposed by many commentators to mean LORD of the hosts of heaven, the Creator and Governor of the celestial worlds, expressing the wonderful power of God, who "in the beginning finished the heavens and the earth and all the *host* of them."

NOTE 11. PAGE 16.

The name of the wife of Phinehas is not given in the Scripture. The name selected means "one amiable, or well beloved." The character of the wife of Phinehas, as it may be gathered from the brief mention of her in the First Book of Samuel, seems to have been almost too gentle and lovely for an union with so corrupt a partner.

NOTE 12. PAGE 16.

My father, peace be thine, &c.

"The forms of salutation, that prevailed among the ancient Hebrews, were as follows:—'*Be thou blessed of JEHOVAH*,—'*The blessing of JEHOVAH be upon thee*,'—'*May GOD be with thee*,'—'*May peace be yours*,'—'*Sir, be your life prospered*,'—'*Hail*.'"—*Jahn's Archæology*, section 175.

NOTE 13. PAGE 17.

On all high places where we honor God.

"The Israelites at first worshipped JEHOVAH in high

places, and afterwards idols. Before the temple was built, the high places were not absolutely contrary to the Law, provided God only was adored there. Under the judges they seem to have been tolerated ; and Samuel offered sacrifice in several places where the ark was not present. Even in David's time the people sacrificed to the LORD at Shiloh, Jerusalem, and Gibeon. The high places were much frequented in the kingdom of Israel ; and on these hills they often adored idols, and committed a thousand abominations." *Robinson's Calmet.*

NOTE 14. PAGE 20.

And near the folds our hirelings kept their guard.

For an account of the habits of the Nomads, or Shepherds, see *Jahn's Arch.*, sections 42, 44.

NOTE 15. PAGE 20.

Six stars I told, the seventh I could not count.

"Pleiades, the seven daughters of Atlas, who being pursued by Orion, were changed by Jupiter into doves. They were translated to the heavens, and form the assemblage of the Seven Stars in the neck of Taurus, called by the Latins Vergiliæ. *There are, however, only six stars visible in Pleiades*,—a fact noticed by Ovid." *Amer. Encycl. Article, Pleiades.*

As this dream is an allegorical annunciation to Eli, of the destruction of his family, and the future glory of Samuel, it is well to observe that his family consisted eventually of six members,—himself, his two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, their wives, and a son of Phinehas, named by his mother, Ichabod, all of whom were

cut off in a few years. The two sons of Eli were both slain in the same battle in which the ark of God fell into the hands of the Philistines. Eli, hearing the sad report of the battle, fell from his seat of judgment and expired. After which the wife of Phinehas, being informed of the death of her father-in-law and husband, was so affected that she died, leaving a son, whose posterity was degraded from the high-priesthood in the reign of Solomon.—See 1 *Sam.* iv. 10–22.

NOTE 16. PAGE 30.

The boy I will devote a Nazarite.

“The Nazarite vowed to let the hair grow, to abstain not only from wine and all inebriating drinks, but from vinegar likewise, to eat no clusters, and to beware of any contamination from corpses, bones, and sepulchres. In some instances, the parents bound the child by the vow of a Nazarite even before its birth.” —*Jahn's Arch.*, section 395.

Most expositors, with the Rabbinical commentators on the Talmud, think that Hannah devoted her son a Nazarite. Grotius, however, says, that the vow of Hannah was not “a vow of a Nazarite,” but a vow in some respects analogous, and resembling that.

NOTE 17. PAGE 30.

*Let GOD be witness to the vow I breathe,
Between His altar and His inner shrine.*

“Sometimes the imprecation was, as follows : ‘*This, and more than this, may GOD do to me.*’ Sometimes the swearer merely said, ‘*Let GOD be a witness ;*’ and sometimes affirmed, saying, ‘*As surely as GOD*

liveth.' The Hebrews also swore by cities and consecrated places."—*Jahn's Arch.*, section 392.

NOTE 18. PAGE 30.

The Septuagint translate 1 Sam. i. 14, as follows : ' And the little boy of Eli said to her, How long wilt thou be drunken ? put away thy wine, and depart from the face of the LORD.' By the "little boy of Eli" these interpreters may have supposed an attendant or a scholar of the priest ; for some suppose, that, even at this time, there was a school of the prophets in Shiloh, under the charge of Eli. St. Chrysostom, in his second sermon upon Hannah, after quoting the above passage from the LXX., remarks, " In this especially may we observe the philosophy of the woman. In the house her rival reproached her ; she came to the Temple, and the little boy of the priest upbraided her, *and the priest himself confirmed the reproach of the lad.* She fled from the tempest at home ; she came to the haven, and again she found other waves."

NOTE 19. PAGE 34.

This Scene is introduced, because the verses, on which the Act is founded, seem to relate to the time when the infant Samuel was introduced into the Abrahamic Covenant, by receiving its external seal. Mohel means "the circumciser." In this scene there is an anachronism ; since the form or ceremony is that of more modern Jews. The ancient rite was probably simpler in its administration ; and the father was probably the Mohel. For a statement of the views of the Jews concerning this rite, and the mode of

its solemnization, the reader is referred to *Calmet's Dictionary*, *Lewis's Hebrew Antiquities*, and *Basnage's History of the Jews*.

NOTE 20. PAGE 34.

I will sing unto the LORD, &c.

"Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the LORD, and spake, saying :

"I will sing unto the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriously :

The horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.

The LORD is my strength and song,

And he is become my salvation :

He is my GOD, and I will prepare him an habitation ;*

My fathers' GOD, and I will exalt him.

The LORD is a man of war : The LORD is his name.

Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath he cast into the sea :

His chosen captains also are drowned in the Red Sea.

The depths have covered them :

They sank into the bottom as a stone.

* "And I will glorify him." *Septuagint*. This translation makes a better parallelism with the succeeding line than our common version. It may not be known to all our readers, that, in Hebrew poetry, each new thought makes, what may be called, the first line of a stanza, which is completed by repeating the same or an analogous thought, in somewhat different language, as another line. This repetition of the thought, this other line, is termed a parallelism. Commonly there is but one of these. Sometimes there are two or three, as occasionally in this song. The peculiar structure of Hebrew poetry fits it admirably for responsive recitation. Thus the Psalms and other songs of the Hebrews were, we believe, read or sung responsively in the Temple-service, and now are in that of the Synagogue.

Thy right hand, O LORD! is become glorious in power :
 Thy right hand, O LORD! hath dashed in pieces the enemy.
 And in the greatness of thine excellency thou hast overthrown them that rose up against thee :
 Thou sentest forth thy wrath, which consumed them as stubble.
 And with the blast of thy nostrils the waters were gathered together,
 The floods stood upright as an heap,
 And the depths were congealed in the heart of the sea.
 The enemy* said, I will pursue, I will overtake,
 I will divide the spoil ; my lust shall be satisfied upon them ;
 I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy (or repossess) them.
 Thou didst blow with thy wind, the sea covered them :
 They sank as lead in the mighty waters.
 Who is like unto thee, O LORD, among the gods ?
 Who is like thee, glorious in (saints or holy ones, *Septuagint*, or) holiness,
 Fearful (to be venerated) in praises, doing wonders ?
 Thou stretchedst out thy right hand, the earth swallowed them.†

* Some versions insert, after "enemy," the word "Pharaoh." So says Michaëlis upon the passage.

† "I went down to the bottoms of the mountains. *The earth with her bars was about me forever ;* or, The bars of the earth shut me up." *Jonah* ii. 6.—In a note upon this place, Michaëlis says, "Thus, *Ex. xv. 12*, we read : '*The earth swallowed them ;*' because the sea, which enclosed the Egyptians and Jonah, is in the abysses of the earth."

Thou, in thy mercy, hast led forth the people, which
thou hast redeemed :

Thou hast guided them in thy strength unto thy holy
habitation.

The people shall hear, and be afraid :

Sorrow shall take hold on the inhabitants of (Philistia
or) Palestina.

Then the dukes (or princes, magnates,) of Edom shall
be amazed ;

The mighty men of Moab, trembling shall take hold
upon them ;

All the inhabitants of Canaan shall melt away.*

Fear and dread shall fall upon them ;

By the greatness of thine arm they shall be as still as
a stone ;

Till thy people pass over, O LORD !

Till the people pass over, which thou hast purchased.

Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the moun-
tain of thine inheritance,

In the place, O LORD ! which thou hast made for thee
to dwell in,

In the Sanctuary, O LORD ! which thy hands have
established.

The LORD shall reign forever and ever.

And Miriam, the prophetess, the sister of Aaron,
took a timbrel in her hand ; and all the women went
out after her with timbrels and with dances. And
Miriam answered them :

* “ Their heart is dissolved in the midst of them.”—*Targum
of Jonathan.*

Sing ye to the LORD! for he hath triumphed gloriously ;

'The horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.'

Exodus xv. 1-18, 20, 21.

In the poem an effort is made to represent the parallelisms of the Hebrew original, generally in the responses of the company. The same remark applies to the psalm which closes the scene.

NOTE 21. PAGE 44.

O God, thy will be done!

The prayer of the father, at this part of the service, was always closed with the above ejaculation. In fact, this whole scene is nothing more than a metrical version of the Jewish ceremony.

NOTE 22. PAGE 45.

Name thou this child.

"A name was given to the male child at the time of its circumcision, but it is probable, that, previous to the introduction of that rite, the name was given immediately after birth. Among the Orientals, the appellations given as names are always significant. Frequently the name was a compound one, one part being the name of the Deity, and among idolatrous nations the name of an idol. The following instances may stand as specimens of the whole, viz. Samuel, *heard or asked of God*; Adonijah, *God is Lord*; Josedech, *God is just*; Belshazzar, *Bel* (a Babylonish deity) *is ruler and king*."—*Jahn's Arch.*, section 164.

The name was commonly given by the mother. See in Gen. ch. xxix. and xxx. ; *Exod.* ii. 10 ; 1 Sam. i. 20 ; iv. 21 ; Luke i. 60.

NOTE 23. PAGE 45.

*E'en first, before his father had embraced,
To own, and bless, the babe, &c.*

“It was the custom, at a very ancient period, for the father, while music in the meanwhile was heard to sound, to clasp the new-born child to his bosom, and by this ceremony he was understood to declare it to be his own.”—*Jahn's Arch.*, section 161.

NOTE 24. PAGE 46.

O blest, thrice blest, &c.

“Blessed is every one that feareth the LORD ;
That walketh in his ways.
For thou shalt eat the labor of thine hands :
Happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee.
Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine
house :
Thy children like olive-plants round about thy table.
Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed,
That feareth the LORD.
The LORD shall bless thee out of Zion :
And thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem all the days
of thy life.
Yea, thou shalt see thy children's children,
And peace upon Israel.”

Psalm 128. A song of degrees.

We have, in the version, so varied some phrases as to accommodate the Psalm to the age of Elkanah.

NOTE 25. PAGE 51.

*Within my arms three years I'll nurse the child,
As is the custom of the Jewish dames;
Then will I bring him to the Holy Place.*

"Mothers, in the earliest times, suckled their offspring themselves, and that from thirty to thirty-six months. 2 Macc. vii. 27."—*Jahn's Arch.*, section 166.

There is some difference of sentiment among commentators as to the age when Samuel was presented in the Tabernacle to the LORD. Some call it three, some five, some eight, and some thirteen years. But there seems to be good sense in the remark of Matthew Henry, "I see no inconvenience in admitting such an extraordinary child as this into the Tabernacle at three years old, to be educated among the children of the priests." This view agrees most exactly with the text of the Scripture.

NOTE 26. PAGE 52.

*But I must leave thee now, to join the guests,
Who wait my coming at the festal board.*

At the time of the performance of this ceremony of initiation into the Jewish community, it was customary to invite ten guests to a feast of thanksgiving with the father.—See *Basnage's History of the Jews*.

NOTE 27. PAGE 53.

My baby, sleep.

In this hymn to her babe, the prophetess is supposed to employ such language as is capable of a double application, the one to her babe, the other through her babe to the future Messiah, whose Advent occupies her

thoughts continually, and whose kingdom she loved. Such a double applicability of language is not uncommon in the prophetic scriptures.

NOTE 28. PAGE 67.

To the glorious JEHOVAH I sing.

For the Ode of Hannah, a version of which closes this drama, the reader is referred to Note 1. pp. 78, 79.

NOTE 29. PAGE 67.

O God, I rejoice in Thy wondrous salvation.

Chrysostom, in his sixth sermon upon Hannah, remarks on this verse, "Observe how she maintains the Law through all her prayer. For as in the beginning she said, 'My heart is strengthened in the LORD, my horn is exalted in my God, my mouth is enlarged upon my enemies,' so also now she says, 'I was made glad in thy salvation,' not simply 'in salvation,' but 'in *thy* salvation.' For not 'in that I am saved,' she says, but 'in that I am saved through *thee*, do I rejoice and exult.' Such are the souls of the holy. They rejoice rather in God who gives, than in the gifts received; for they do not love God on account of his gifts, but the gifts because they come from God. And if we sin, we are distressed, not because we are chastised, but because we have exasperated the Master; and if we do well, we rejoice, not on account of the kingdom of heaven, but because we long for the King of heaven."

NOTE 30. PAGE 71.

Let not the wise man boast, &c.

“After the clause, ‘the adversaries of the LORD shall be broken in pieces,’ the Septuagint add the following words: ‘Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom; and let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him who glorieth rather glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth the LORD; and that he executeth judgment and righteousness in the midst of the earth.’ This is a very long addition, and appears to be taken from Jeremiah ix. 23, 24; but, on collating the two places, the reader will find the words to be materially different.”—*Dr. Adam Clarke.*



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